



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge

Refuge Highlights

November 2019: The Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge is presently located in twenty-two different locations in the four primary Connecticut River watershed states of Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont.

Learning About Watersheds



Photo Credit: USFWS

Conte Refuge recently began working more closely with Chestnut Academy Middle School in Springfield, Massachusetts. In collaboration with our partners from the Springfield Science Museum, we hosted 20 middle school students from Chestnut Academy for a morning of learning at the museum. The students split their time learning about watersheds and river morphology using the Emriver River Table, and exploring STEM activities at the museum's newly installed Smithsonian Spark Lab. We look forward to working more with these students and teachers in the future.

For more information contact: Jennifer_Lapis@fws.gov

After School Fun Clubs



Photo Credit: USFWS

In our continued partnership with the Springfield Parks and Recreation Department, Conte Staff are engaging elementary age students during their after school programs. Using the Springfield School's science curriculum as a guideline, we are developing and implementing programs for students that teach them about science related topics in a fun and interactive setting. Additionally beneficial is our repeated visits with the same students each week, which help us develop trusting and lasting relationships with the students.

For more information contact: Jennifer_Lapis@fws.gov

A Boost for Long Island Sound and the Friends of Outer Island



Photo Credit: Patrick Comins

Stewart B. McKinney's Friends of Outer Island were awarded a grant as part of a large collaborative effort to improve the health and ecosystem of the Long Island Sound. The project will deliver a ten-event experiential education series to immerse 385 students, teachers, and families from New Haven, Connecticut in looking at environmental challenges faced by Long Island Sound. Congratulations to the Refuge, Friends Group and all the community members who will be privileged to take part in this exciting program.

For more information contact: Shaun_Roche@fws.gov



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Black Branch Boardwalk Project at Nulhegan Division



Photo Credit: USFWS

Staff from the Conte NFWR and the Steward B. McKinney NWR teamed up to begin work on the first section of the Nulhegan Wildlife Tour Route. The new route will allow visitors of all mobility levels to explore and learn about stream restoration and the various habitat types at Nulhegan Basin Division.

For more information contact: Steve_Agius@fws.gov

Volunteer Trail Day at Pondicherry Division



Photo Credit:
Friends of Pondicherry

Volunteers from the Friends of Pondicherry (New Hampshire) and the Cohos Trail Association worked to improve the Colonel Whipple and Slide Brook Trails. The team installed new sections of bog bridging and made tread improvements to upgrade the condition of the trails. Volunteers from Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont helped with the project.

For more information contact: Steve_Agius@fws.gov

Federal Highways Culvert Replacement Project at Nulhegan Division



Photo Credit: USFWS

Five large culverts were replaced at the Nulhegan Basin Division in Vermont. The road crossing projects were designed by the Department of Transportation Eastern Federal Highways. The projects included one arch culvert and four box culverts. The new culverts are embedded with native materials to increase aquatic organism passage. The five culverts not only improve brook trout stream connectivity, but also improve public recreation access at the refuge.

For more information contact: Steve_Agius@FWS.gov



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Migratory Bird Big Sit at Pondicherry Division



Photo Credit: Friends of Pondicherry

Eighteen participants and 120 visitors took part in the annual migratory bird Big Sit at the Pondicherry Division of the Conte Refuge in New Hampshire this month. The group observed 33 species of birds from the Cherry Pond viewing platform. A total of 239 bird species were observed at the Pondicherry Division throughout Fiscal Year 2019. Some notable species include common eider, surf and white-winged scoters, and black-billed cuckoo.

For more information contact: Steve_Agius@fws.gov

Increasing Aerial Insectivore Nesting Habitat



Photo Credit: USFWS

A private landowner in the town of South Hadley, Massachusetts has offered to use his twelve thousand square-foot building to support our aerial insectivore initiative, focusing on birds to bats. We hope to connect this structure with our urban wildlife refuge partnership, as well as area schools.

For more information contact: Andrew_French@fws.gov

Stewart B. McKinney Helps Plant Trees in New Haven



Photo Credit: USFWS

Staff from Stewart B. McKinney NWR worked along side student volunteers from Southern Connecticut State University to plant native trees on campus. The team planted three eastern redbud and three American flowering dogwood trees, expanding the already flourishing pollinator and vegetable garden located on campus. The project was completed as part of the New Haven Urban Refuge Partnership.

For more information contact: Shaun_Roche@fws.gov